

Studying the Language of Young Learners

Workshop at the University of Bamberg, Germany, 17 to 18 September 2025, organized by Anna Rosen (University of Freiburg), Robert Fuchs (University of Bonn) & Valentin Werner (University of Bamberg) as part of the project [Young German Learner English](#).



In research on Second Language Acquisition (SLA), and in the domain of Learner Corpus Research (LCR) specifically, there has been a tendency to rely on material from advanced learners, often university students, given their comparatively easy accessibility for researchers (Gilquin, 2015; Plonsky, 2017). In consequence, young second language (L2) learners, typically found within institutional (secondary school) contexts, are severely underrepresented (Tracy-Ventura et al., 2021). However, this underrepresented group is of great *theoretical* significance (Myles, 2015, 2021), as these learners exemplify foundational learning stages. They are also of *applied* interest in language education, as vastly more monetary and personnel resources are devoted to teaching languages in schools than at universities. As a consequence, improvements in teacher education and teaching practices drawing on insights from SLA and LCR could yield substantial benefits to society.

In the broader context of calls for more diversity in LCR and SLA (e.g. Paquot, 2024), this workshop is intended as a meeting ground for researchers who engage with young learner (inter-)language to share insights from their current projects. We invite **single- or multiple-authored papers** on relevant empirical research and encourage contributions that, for instance,

- analyze and interpret patterns found in young learner (inter-)language;
- illustrate (young) learner trajectories;
- compare and contrast data from L1 and L2 learners;
- work with innovative tasks for data elicitation;
- triangulate approaches (e.g. corpus-based and experimental or questionnaire-based ones).

The workshop will feature two **keynotes** by

- [Shin'ichiro Ishikawa](#) (University of Kobe, Japan), leader of the [ICNALE](#) project
- [Olga Lopopolo](#) (Eurac Research, Bolzano, Italy), co-compiler of the [LEONIDE](#) corpus

Moreover, all participants will be invited to interact in a **collaborative breakout session** on future challenges and trends in research on young learners.

We encourage submissions by emerging (non-tenured) researchers and will award a **best paper prize** among those eligible.¹ This workshop is co-located with the summer school *Methods and Developments in Learner Corpus Research*. The **working language** of the event is English, and we are open to contributions on all target languages. The workshop is primarily an in-person event, but we may accept a limited number of online contributions.

¹ Papers with multiple authors are eligible if the first author is an emerging (non-tenured) researcher.

The focus of papers should lie primarily on **empirical results** and their **interpretation**. Specific methodological issues, which may be at stake in research on young learner language, will be addressed in a second workshop, planned for 2026.

Please submit your **abstracts** (in the range of 400–500 words + potentially a data table or figure for illustration + references; please use APA style) before **31 March 2025** at <https://easyabs.linguistlist.org/conference/SLYL/>. You will receive feedback on acceptance in **May 2025**.

References

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- Tracy-Ventura, N., Paquot, M. & Myles, F. (2021). The future of corpora in SLA. In N. Tracy-Ventura & M. Paquot (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Corpora* (pp. 409–424). Routledge.

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